

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method for testing scanner updates, comprising:
 - 2 (a) distributing a full-release scanner update from a server to a plurality of
 - 3 computers utilizing a network;
 - 4 (b) distributing a pre-release scanner update from the server to the computers
 - 5 utilizing the network;
 - 6 (c) executing the full-release scanner update on the computers for security
 - 7 scanning;
 - 8 (d) executing the pre-release scanner update on the computers for testing
 - 9 purposes; and
 - 10 (e) transmitting results of the testing from the computers to the server utilizing
 - 11 the network.
- 1 2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the full-release scanner update and
- 2 the pre-release scanner update are distributed simultaneously.
- 1 3. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the full-release scanner update and
- 2 the pre-release scanner update are distributed together.
- 1 4. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the pre-release scanner update is
- 2 distributed on a periodic basis.
- 1 5. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the pre-release scanner update is
- 2 distributed with virus signatures.
- 1 6. The method as recited in claim 1, and further comprising automatically
- 2 determining whether a pre-release scanner update exists, and conditionally

3 distributing the pre-release scanner update from the server if the pre-release
4 scanner update exists.

1 7. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the pre-release scanner update is
2 executed when the computers are idle.

1 8. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the pre-release scanner update is
2 executed automatically when the computers are idle.

1 9. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the results are transmitted to a
2 quality assurance administrator.

1 10. The method as recited in claim 1, and further comprising comparing results
2 of the execution of the full-release scanner update and the pre-release scanner
3 update.

1 11. The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the comparison occurs on the
2 computers.

1 12. The method as recited in claim 11, and further comprising transmitting
2 results of the comparison from the computers to the server utilizing the
3 network.

1 13. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the network includes the Internet.

1 14. The method as recited in claim 10, and further comprising determining
2 whether a virus is detected by the execution of the pre-release scanner update
3 and not the full-release scanner update based on the comparison.

1 15. The method as recited in claim 14, and further comprising removing the
2 virus.

- 1 16. The method as recited in claim 14, and further comprising storing a record of
2 the virus.
- 1 17. The method as recited in claim 14, and further comprising reporting the
2 virus.
- 1 18. The method as recited in claim 1, and further comprising detecting faults
2 associated with the execution of the pre-release scanner update.
- 1 19. The method as recited in claim 18, and further comprising transmitting a
2 record of the faults from the computers to the server utilizing the network.
- 1 20. The method as recited in claim 18, and further comprising ceasing the
2 execution of the pre-release scanner update on the computers in response to
3 the detection of the faults.
- 1 21. The method as recited in claim 20, and further comprising re-executing the
2 pre-release scanner update on the computers after ceasing the execution.
- 1 22. The method as recited in claim 18, and further comprising counting a number
2 of the faults, and conditionally terminating the pre-release scanner update on
3 the computers based on the number.
- 1 23. The method as recited in claim 22, wherein the faults include at least one of
2 delays, failures, crashes, and false alarms.
- 1 24. The method as recited in claim 1, and further comprising detecting a duration
2 of the execution of the pre-release scanner update.

1 25. The method as recited in claim 24, and further comprising transmitting a
2 record of the duration from the computers to the server utilizing the network.

1 26. The method as recited in claim 1, and further comprising utilizing the results
2 to modify the pre-release scanner update before releasing the pre-release
3 scanner update as a full-release scanner update.

1 27. A computer program product for testing scanner updates, comprising:
2 (a) computer code for distributing a full-release scanner update from a server to
3 a plurality of computers utilizing a network;
4 (b) computer code for distributing a pre-release scanner update from the server
5 to the computers utilizing the network;
6 (c) computer code for executing the full-release scanner update on the computers
7 for security scanning;
8 (d) computer code for executing the pre-release scanner update on the computers
9 for testing purposes; and
10 (e) computer code for transmitting results of the testing from the computers to
11 the server utilizing the network.

1 28. A system for testing scanner updates, comprising:
2 (a) logic for distributing a full-release scanner update from a server to a plurality
3 of computers utilizing a network;
4 (b) logic for distributing a pre-release scanner update from the server to the
5 computers utilizing the network;
6 (c) logic for executing the full-release scanner update on the computers for
7 security scanning;
8 (d) logic for executing the pre-release scanner update on the computers for
9 testing purposes; and
10 (e) logic for transmitting results of the testing from the computers to the server
11 utilizing the network.

- 1 29. A server-based method for testing scanner updates, comprising:
2 (a) distributing a full-release scanner update from a server to a plurality of
3 computers utilizing a network;
4 (b) distributing a pre-release scanner update from the server to the computers
5 utilizing the network;
6 (c) receiving results of the execution of the full-release scanner update and the
7 pre-release scanner update from the computers;
8 (d) modifying the pre-release scanner update before releasing the pre-release
9 scanner update as a full-release scanner update based on the results.

- 1 30. A client-based method for testing scanner updates, comprising:
2 (a) receiving from a server a full-release scanner update at a computer utilizing a
3 network;
4 (b) receiving from the server a pre-release scanner update at the computer
5 utilizing the network;
6 (c) executing the full-release scanner update on the computer for security
7 scanning;
8 (d) executing the pre-release scanner update on the computer for testing
9 purposes; and
10 (e) transmitting results of the testing from the computer to the server utilizing
11 the network.

- 1 31. A method for testing scanner updates, comprising:
2 (a) distributing a full-release scanner update from a server to a plurality of
3 computers utilizing a network;
4 (b) distributing a pre-release scanner update from the server to the computers
5 simultaneously with the full-release update utilizing the network;
6 (c) executing the full-release scanner update on the computers for security
7 scanning;
8 (d) determining whether the computers are idle;

- 9 (e) automatically executing the pre-release scanner update on the computers for
- 10 testing purposes upon the computers being determined to be idle;
- 11 (f) comparing results of the execution of the full-release scanner update and the
- 12 pre-release scanner update;
- 13 (g) determining whether a virus is detected by the execution of the pre-release
- 14 scanner update and not by the full-release scanner update based on the
- 15 comparison;
- 16 (h) storing a record of the detected virus;
- 17 (i) removing the detected virus;
- 18 (j) detecting faults associated with the execution of the pre-release scanner
- 19 update;
- 20 (k) ceasing the execution of the pre-release scanner update on the computers in
- 21 response to the detection of at least one fault;
- 22 (l) re-executing the pre-release scanner update on the computers after ceasing
- 23 the execution;
- 24 (m) counting a number of the faults;
- 25 (n) conditionally re-executing the pre-release scanner update on the computers if
- 26 the number exceeds a predetermined number within a predetermined amount
- 27 of time;
- 28 (o) storing a record of the faults;
- 29 (p) transmitting results relating to the viruses and faults from the computers to
- 30 the server utilizing the network; and
- 31 (q) modifying the pre-release scanner update at the server before releasing the
- 32 pre-release scanner update as a full-release scanner update based on the
- 33 results.